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Amendments to the Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A heat-sensitive stencil master comprising a heat-sensitive polymeric film having a thickness of less than 10  $\mu\text{m}$  and, coated thereon, a solid ~~resinous~~ foam comprising a cross-linked resin and a foaming agent.
2. (Original) A stencil master according to claim 1, wherein the foaming agent is a surfactant having an HLB of greater than 6.
3. (Original) A stencil master according to claim 1, wherein the solid foam incorporates a fibrous material.
4. (Original) A stencil master according to claim 3, wherein the fibrous material has a diameter of greater than 1  $\mu\text{m}$  and less than 10  $\mu\text{m}$ , and a length in the range of 100  $\mu\text{m}$  to 14 mm.
5. (Original) A stencil master according to claim 3, wherein the fibrous material has a length in the range of 100  $\mu\text{m}$  to 500  $\mu\text{m}$ .
6. (Currently amended) A stencil master according to claim 3, wherein the fibrous material is selected from the group consisting of carbon fibres, glass fibres, and polymeric fibres ~~such as polyester fibres and polyvinyl alcohol fibres~~.
7. (Original) A stencil master according to claim 6, wherein the fibrous material comprises carbon fibres.
8. - 9. (Cancelled)

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10. (Currently amended) A stencil master according to claim 9~~1~~, wherein the resin is cross-linked by irradiation.

11. (Currently amended) A stencil master according to claim 10~~1~~, wherein the resin is cross-linked by electron beam irradiation.

12. (Currently amended) A stencil master according to claim 9~~1~~, wherein the resin is a polyurethane cross-linked through unsaturated acrylate groups.

13. (Original) A stencil master according to claim 1, wherein the solid foam incorporates an antistatic agent.

14. (Original) A stencil master according to claim 1, wherein the heat-sensitive polymeric film has a release coating on the side of the film opposite the solid foam.

15. (Original) A stencil master according to claim 1, wherein the foaming agent comprises ammonium stearate, a sulphate foaming agent or a mixture thereof.

16. (Cancelled)

17. (Original) A stencil for use in a digital duplicating printing process comprising a stencil master as defined in claim 1, which has been thermally imaged to produce voids in the heat-sensitive polymeric film.

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Currently amended) A heat-sensitive stencil master comprising a heat-sensitive polymeric film and, coated thereon, a solid porous resin coating comprising a cross-linked resin

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and having a filler dispersed therein, wherein the filler is selected from the group consisting of carbon fibres, carbon particles and mixtures thereof.

20. (Original) A stencil master according to claim 19, wherein the filler comprises carbon fibres having a diameter of greater than 1  $\mu\text{m}$  and less than 10  $\mu\text{m}$ , and a length in the range of 100  $\mu\text{m}$  to 14 mm.

21. (Original) A stencil master according to claim 20, wherein the carbon fibres have a length in the range of 100  $\mu\text{m}$  to 500  $\mu\text{m}$ .

22. - 23. (Cancelled)

24. (Currently amended) A stencil master according to claim ~~23~~19, wherein the resin is cross-linked by electron beam irradiation.

25. (Cancelled)

26. (Original) A stencil for use in a digital duplicating printing process comprising a stencil master as defined in claim 19, which has been thermally imaged to produce voids in the heat-sensitive polymeric film.

27. (Cancelled)

28. (Original) A method for manufacturing a heat-sensitive stencil comprising coating onto a heat-sensitive polymeric film having a thickness of less than 10  $\mu\text{m}$ , a liquid foam comprising a resin dispersed or dissolved in a volatile liquid, and, optionally, a foaming agent, and drying the liquid foam to form a solid foam coating.

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29. (Original) A method according to claim 28, wherein the volatile liquid is water.
30. (Original) A stencil master produced by the method defined in claim 28.
31. (New) A stencil master according to claim 6, wherein the polymeric fibres are selected from the group consisting of polyester fibres and polyvinyl alcohol fibres.
32. (New) A stencil master according to claim 1, wherein the stencil master has a stiffness (mN):coating weight ( $\text{g/m}^2$ ) ratio of at least 6.
33. (New) A stencil master according to claim 1, wherein the stencil master has a stiffness (mN):coating weight ( $\text{g/m}^2$ ) ratio of at least 8.
34. (New) A stencil master according to claim 1, wherein the stencil master has a stiffness (mN):coating weight ( $\text{g/m}^2$ ) ratio of at least 10.
35. (New) A stencil master according to claim 19, wherein the stencil master has a stiffness (mN):coating weight ( $\text{g/m}^2$ ) ratio of at least 6.
36. (New) A stencil master according to claim 19, wherein the stencil master has a stiffness (mN):coating weight ( $\text{g/m}^2$ ) ratio of at least 8.
37. (New) A stencil master according to claim 19, wherein the stencil master has a stiffness (mN):coating weight ( $\text{g/m}^2$ ) ratio of at least 10.

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